

Southfields Primary School and Coventry City Council

Guidance on Parent / Carer / Visitor behaviour on school premises

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Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a framework for schools in setting expectations for Parent / Carer / Visitor behaviour and managing situations where such behaviour is a cause for concern.

This guidance is for all maintained schools in Coventry and is written following the principles laid out in the government guidance "[Controlling access to school premises](#)".

Rationale

All pupils, staff and site users have the right to be safe and to feel safe on school premises.

When pupils attend school, the ambition is to provide them with the highest possible academic provision but also a positive personal, social and emotional environment and set of experiences that set them up well for their next stage of education or work. It is important that all adults they encounter model the behaviour that we wish them to aspire to.



All staff have the right to work in the confidence that they will be free from verbal or physical abuse or threat. This enables them to work positively and effectively in the best interests of all children.

Furthermore, all legitimate visitors to a school site have the right to have a safe and positive visit.

Setting Expectations

Schools should ensure they have set clear expectations and that these have been communicated to all stakeholders and site users.

For pupils, an effective behaviour policy should be created and implemented based on the behaviour principles agreed by the governors at the school. A code of conduct should also be in place for all staff.

For parents and carers, it is recommended that expectations are clearly communicated on entry to the school community with reminders provided annually thereafter. A model statement is provided in the appendices to this guidance but each school will need to tailor its communication according to its specific context (e.g. previous experience regarding challenging behaviour and ensuring the communication for parents aligns with the behaviour principles set out for pupils). To note, a school can ask a parent/carer to sign a "home / school partnership" style document but should be aware that this will not hold any legal power that exceeds statutory rules, e.g. admissions guidance for schools.

For all site visitors, it is recommended that signage is used to set out expectations for adult behaviour on site. This serves a dual purpose to make the expectations clear but also provide reassurance. A model statement is provided in the appendices to this guidance but this may need to be tailored according to a school's context.

All schools should also have a regularly reviewed complaints process which is clearly available to parents, carers and other members of the community so that concerns and complaints can be managed appropriately withing a set framework. It is recommended that senior leaders and governors have regular training on the handling of complaints and concerns.



Defining inappropriate behaviour by parents, carers and other visitors on school site

The government guidance "Controlling access to school premises" states that... *schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.*

In practice, inappropriate behaviour could include:

- Any form of prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour
- Sexualised comments and/or behaviour
- Shouting at others, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating others e.g. standing very close to them
- Threatening behaviour or language
- Aggressively gesturing
- Swearing
- Physical aggression e.g. pushing, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking
- Spitting
- Breaching school security procedures

This list is not included in the model statement defining parental expectations in the appendices to this guidance. However, schools may wish to include some examples if this is pertinent to their context and experience.

Inappropriate behaviour via remote communications

Inappropriate behaviour from parents, carers or others can take place in person (as described above) but can also take place remotely, e.g. by phone, email or via social media channels.

Remote or online behaviour can still fit the definition in the government guidance: *schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.* If so, the actions described in the next section may still be followed.



If concerns are being raised remotely, those raising these concerns should be redirected to the school's complaints procedure. The complaints procedure should include guidance regarding malicious and repetitive complaints.

If remote or online behaviour does not fit the definition above (e.g. it does not meet the threshold of a member of staff or pupil feeling threatened), then the actions described below are not applicable in managing the situation. In such instances, advice should be sought from the Local Authority, contracted legal support or the police.

Process for managing inappropriate behaviour on school premises

This guidance provides four tiers of actions that can be taken to manage inappropriate behaviour by parents, carers or other visitors to school. These tiers have a hierarchy and can be used sequentially. However, depending on the nature of any particular incident, a process could be instigated at any of the tiers, e.g. for a serious incident, the first action could take place at the third or fourth tier.

The headteacher makes the decision about which tier is appropriate for a particular instance or incident. They should take into account the severity of the behaviour, any history of similar behaviours and the perceived likelihood of reoccurrence. Although it is the headteacher's decision, they can take advice from:

- Staff colleagues as appropriate
- Coventry LA Senior Advisor in Education Improvement
- Legal services bought into by the school
- Police (mainly relevant if considering or pursuing Tier 4 action)

The headteacher may also wish to discuss issues with members of the governing body but should be mindful that independent governor involvement could be required in the processes described below and / or should a complaint be made regarding the process.

Tier 1	Meeting to discuss behaviour
Process	A meeting is convened between the headteacher and the person whose behaviour has caused the concern. This is an informal stage of



	the process with a view to resolving concerns and ensuring expectations of appropriate behaviour are clarified. If the response from the parent / carer / visitor does not demonstrate an acceptance of the inappropriate behaviour, the decision could be made to progress to another tier without any further incident occurring.
Involves	The headteacher makes the decision to initiate the Tier 1 process and, in most cases, would meet with the person exhibiting the challenging behaviour. The recommendation is that the headteacher would be accompanied by another staff member for this meeting. Consideration should be given to the wellbeing safety of staff involved (e.g. a risk assessment could need to be created or referred to).
Resources	Reference could be made to school documentation regarding expectations of behaviour. Advice is available from Coventry City Council Education Improvement team and / or Legal Services (whichever provider the school purchases advice from).

Tier 2	Warning letter issued
Process	A letter is written to the parent / carer / visitor advising that the specific behaviour observed / experienced is unacceptable and that future similar occurrences will result in them being barred from the school site.
Involves	The headteacher makes the decision to initiate the Tier 2 process and in most instances would send the letter in their own name. An exception to this would be if the headteacher has been involved in the incident in which case the letter could be sent by the Chair of Governors. Should the person causing the concern wish to respond, a meeting could be convened to facilitate this. The recommendation would then be that the headteacher (or Chair of Governors) would be accompanied by another staff member for this meeting. Consideration should be

	given to the wellbeing safety of staff involved (e.g. a risk assessment could need to be created or referred to).
Resources	Model letter structure is provided in the appendices. Advice is available from Coventry City Council Education Improvement team and / or Legal Services (whichever provider the school purchases advice from).

Tier 3	Barring letter issued
Process	Step One – A preliminary letter is written to the parent / carer / visitor advising that they are barred from the school site for an initial period. The reason for the barring needs to be made explicit. The parent / carer / visitor must be given the opportunity to respond within a set timeframe. The school needs to give appropriate thought to ensuring that pupils on the school roll will still be able to attend with the minimum possible impact on their educational provision. Step Two – Any response from the parent / carer / visitor (either written or provided at an arranged meeting) is reviewed by the headteacher with advice / support taken as appropriate. Step Three – a final decision letter is issued. Either: • Confirming the barring period laid out in the preliminary letter if no response has been received • Confirming the barring period laid out in the preliminary letter as the response from the parent / carer / visitor has not altered the decision • Revoking the barring period laid out in the preliminary letter as the response from the parent / carer / visitor has altered the decision Should the parent / carer / visitor wish to challenge the final decision, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
Involves	The headteacher makes the decision to initiate the Tier 3 process and in most instances would send the letter in their own name. An exception

	to this would be if the headteacher has been involved in the incident in which case the letter could be sent by the Chair of Governors. If a meeting could be convened to facilitate a response from the parent / carer / visitor (after Step One), the recommendation would then be that the headteacher (or Chair of Governors) would be accompanied by another staff member for this meeting. Consideration should be given to the wellbeing safety of staff involved (e.g. a risk assessment could need to be created or referred to).
Resources	Model letter structures are provided in the appendices. Advice is available from Coventry City Council Education Improvement team and / or Legal Services (whichever provider the school purchases advice from).

Tier 4	Referral to police
Process	Referrals can be made to the police where processes at previous tiers have already been followed but not effected a change or, more rarely, where the behaviour of a parent / carer / visitor is escalating or particularly problematic. The police will support and provide advice regarding the most appropriate next step which may, for example, include issuing a Community Protection Warning (CPW). The Police will assess the circumstances of each particular case and set out specific conditions within a CPW that must be met to address the behaviour, including clear expectations on an individual's behaviour moving forward. If any conditions contained within a CPW are breached, a Community Protection Notice (CPN) may be issued.

	A CPN will include the same conditions as the CPW, but crucially carries a power of arrest when issued by the Police. This means that should a person breach the conditions of a CPN they could be arrested and charged to appear before the Magistrates Court. If convicted, they will receive a fine. Other legal options also exist regarding verbal and physical abuse and the police would advise on the best approach in such instances. Police colleagues are very clear that they will support schools in ensuring that pupils and staff feel safe.
Involves	The headteacher makes the decision to refer to the police. The police will lead on appropriate next steps.
Resources	Police will support as appropriate.

Consequences of breaking conditions of being barred from the school premises

Government guidance provides the following information regarding the removal of individuals from a school site:

"Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises without legal permission to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance. Trespassing itself does not constitute a criminal offence.

To have committed a criminal offence, an abusive individual must have been barred from the premises or have exceeded their 'implied licence', then also have caused a nuisance or disturbance.

If a school has reasonable grounds to suspect that someone has committed an offence, then they can be removed from the school by a police officer or a person authorised by the appropriate authority such as the:

- governing board
- local authority
- proprietor of that school"



Therefore, if an individual is barred from the school premises for a period, they can be reminded of the barring period and asked to leave but they are not undertaking a criminal offence unless their behaviour is abusive or they are causing a nuisance of disturbance.

However, if the individual has been barred and is ignoring the conditions laid out in the barring letter, the advice to schools would then be to liaise with the police regarding a Community Protection Warning or Community Protection Notice (see above). Breaching the conditions of a Community Protection Notice is a criminal offence.

Appendices

- i) [Model statement - Expectations for parent / carer / visitor behaviour](#)
- ii) [Model statement - Behaviour of visitors on the school premises](#)
- iii) [Model letter – Warning regarding inappropriate behaviour](#)
- iv) [Model letter – Preliminary letter regarding barring from school premises](#)
- v) [Model letter – Confirmation of barring from school premises](#)
- vi) [Model letter – Revoking of barring from school premises](#)

Appendix One

Model statement – Expectations for parent / carer / visitor behaviour

At Southfields Primary School we are committed to providing all pupils with the best possible educational provision in line with our vision:

At Southfields, every child will develop their unique potential and open their minds to what is possible.

We believe in the importance of home / school partnership and welcome parents, carers and visitors to our site and community in support of our vision. We will act to ensure that the school remains a safe place for pupils, staff and all other members of the community. If a parent, carer or other member of the community has concerns, we will always listen to them and seek to address them.

In return, we expect that members of the public, parents, carers and other visitors to our school will behave in a polite and courteous manner to each other, to staff and to pupils. It is expected that parents and carers will be positive role models with respect to conduct and managing individual concerns.

Southfields Primary School will not tolerate aggressive, violent, abusive or anti-social behaviour towards anyone at the school - this includes in person and via remote platforms such as by telephone or online communication. Such behaviour will always be challenged - this can include banning the individual from the school premises or pursuing other legal action.

Appendix Two

Model statement – Behaviour of visitors on the school premises (e.g. for displaying at entrances to the school premises / building)

Southfields Primary School welcomes all visitors.

- Our school is a positive learning environment where all pupils, staff and visitors should be safe and feel safe.
- We expect all visitors to contribute to this by behaving in a polite and courteous manner to each other, to staff and to pupils.
- We will not tolerate aggressive, violent, abusive or anti-social behaviour towards anyone at the school.

Appendix Three

Model letter – Warning regarding inappropriate behaviour

Dear **NAME**,

Southfields Primary School values close links with parents, carers and the wider community. We believe that pupils benefit from positive relationships between all adults in our school community. For this reason, we do not tolerate inappropriate behaviour from any adult towards any pupil, member of staff or other member of our school community.

I am writing today regarding your behaviour **INSERT TIME, DATE AND CIRCUMSTANCE OF INCIDENT. ADD SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING THE INCIDENT AND THE PARTICULAR BEHAVIOUR JUDGED TO BE INAPPROPRIATE.**

I must inform you that the school will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to safeguard its staff and pupils.

In this instance, I have judged the appropriate action to be to write to you to remind you of the behaviour we expect of you as a member of our community.

We expect that members of the public, parents, carers and other visitors to our school will behave in a polite and courteous manner to each other, to staff and to pupils. It is expected that parents and carers will be positive role models with respect to conduct and managing individual concerns.

We will not tolerate aggressive, violent, abusive or anti-social behaviour towards anyone at the school - this includes in person and via remote platforms such as by telephone or online communication. Such behaviour will always be challenged.

Please be aware that any future similar incidents could lead to you being barred from the school site for a fixed period. The school also holds the right to pursue other actions including referral to the police.

You are welcome to provide, in writing, any comments or observations of your own in relation to this incident. These comments may include any expressions of regret on your part, any assurances that you are prepared to give about your future good conduct or any additional information you believe I should be aware of.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER or CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Appendix Four

Model letter – Preliminary letter regarding barring from school premises

Dear **NAME**,

Southfields Primary School values close links with parents, carers and the wider community. We believe that pupils benefit from positive relationships between all adults in our school community. For this reason, we do not tolerate inappropriate behaviour from any adult towards any pupil, member of staff or other member of our school community.

I am writing today regarding your behaviour **INSERT TIME, DATE AND CIRCUMSTANCE OF INCIDENT. ADD SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING THE INCIDENT AND THE PARTICULAR BEHAVIOUR JUDGED TO BE INAPPROPRIATE.**

I must inform you that the school will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to safeguard its staff and pupils. We will not tolerate aggressive, violent, abusive or anti-social behaviour towards anyone at the school - this includes in person and via remote platforms such as by telephone or online communication. Such behaviour will always be challenged.

Barring from School Premises

As a result of the behaviour described above, I am instructing you that you are barred from the school premises for a fixed period of time. The duration of this date will be from **INSERT DATE** to **INSERT DATE**.

If you wish to make any representations or provide additional information that you believe should be taken into consideration, this should be provided in writing by **INSERT DATE (USUALLY 3 WORKING DAYS AFTER THE LETTER IS ISSUED)**. Following this date, I will write again to either confirm or revoke the barring period.



You will be able to return to the school premises on **INSERT DATE. IF NEEDED...** We will be in touch to arrange a meeting on this date to ensure there is a shared clarity of expectations in place for positive partnership working moving forward.

Please be aware that any future similar incidents could lead to you being barred from the school site for further fixed periods. The school also holds the right to pursue other actions including referral to the police.

IF RELEVANT...

It is your legal duty to ensure that your child(ren) continue to attend school throughout this period. We have made the following arrangements to facilitate their arrival and departure from school: **INSERT.**

Yours sincerely,

HEADTEACHER or CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Appendix Five

Model letter – Confirmation of barring from school premises

Dear **NAME,**

I am writing today following on from letter of **INSERT DATE.** This regards you being barred from the school premises following an incident on **INSERT DATE.**

EITHER:

I received the information you provided in regard to the incident and have considered whether the barring remains an appropriate course of action. I have judged that the original decision stands and that the barring period will remain in place.

OR:

I did not receive any additional information from you regarding the incident and, therefore, the original decision stands and the barring period will remain in place.

The last day of the barring period is **INSERT DATE** which means you can return to the school premises on **INSERT DATE**. **IF NEEDED... We will be in touch to arrange a meeting on this date to ensure there is a shared clarity of expectations in place for positive partnership working moving forward.**

Please be aware that any future similar incidents could lead to you being barred from the school site for further fixed periods. The school also holds the right to pursue other actions including referral to the police.

IF RELEVANT...

It is your legal duty to ensure that your child(ren) continue to attend school throughout this period. We have made the following arrangements to facilitate their arrival and departure from school: INSERT.

If you are not satisfied that the school has followed correct procedure regarding this process, please refer to the school's complaints procedure which can be found at southfieldsprimary.org (under key info).

Yours sincerely,

HEADTEACHER or CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Appendix Six

Model letter – Revoking of barring from school premises

Dear **NAME**,

I am writing today following on from letter of **INSERT DATE**. This regards you being barred from the school premises following an incident on **INSERT DATE**.

I have reviewed the additional information that you have provided regarding the incident. With this new information, I have judged that the decision to bar you from the school premises for a fixed period has been revoked.

You are now welcome to access school premises with immediate effect.

However, I would remind you that we expect that members of the public, parents, carers and other visitors to our school will behave in a polite and courteous manner to each other, to staff and to pupils. It is expected that parents and carers will be positive role models with respect to conduct and managing individual concerns.

We will not tolerate aggressive, violent, abusive or anti-social behaviour towards anyone at the school - this includes in person and via remote platforms such as by telephone or online communication. Such behaviour will always be challenged.

Please be aware that any future incidents of inappropriate behaviour could lead to you being barred from the school site for a fixed period. The school also holds the right to pursue other actions including referral to the police.

IF NEEDED... We will be in touch to arrange a meeting to ensure there is a shared clarity of expectations in place for positive partnership working moving forward.

Yours sincerely,

HEADTEACHER or CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

